

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7412

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO BY POUCH

USLO PEKING BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 6882

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, SHUM

SUBJECT: TAIWAN POLITICAL REVIEW AND ITS NEW "RIVAL"

REFERENCE: TAIPEI 6133

1. THE THIRD ISSUE OF TAIWAN POLITICAL REVIEW (TPR) IS IN EMBASSY'S VIEW A LITTLE THIN. THE CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE IN THE MAIN ARE RELATIVE OR COMPLETE POLITICAL UNKNOWNNS AND MUCH OF THE CONTENT IS MERELY A REHASH OF EARLIER ARTICLES.

2. UNLIKE THE PREVIOUS ISSUE, THE THIRD ISSUE APPEARED ON NEWS STANDS IN KAOHSIUNG PROMPTLY, AND THE EMBASSY IS NOT AWARE OF ANY FURTHER GROC EFFORTS TO SUPPRESS THE MAGAZINE. HOWEVER, AT LEAST ONE OTHER PUBLICATION -- CHUNG KUO PAO TAO (CKPT) -- HAS LEVELLED FAIRLY CONSISTENT ATTACKS AGAINST THE FIRST TWO ISSUES OF TPR. CKPT IS A LOW-CIRCULATION MAIN-LANDER WEEKLY MAGAZINE WHICH NORMALLY HAS NO PARTICULAR AXE TO GRIND AND APPEARS TO HAVE NO DIRECT RELATIONSHIP TO OR SPONSORSHIP FROM THE GROC. IN SEVERAL RECENT ISSUES, HOWEVER, THE MAGAZINE'S PRIMARY FOCUS HAS BEEN ATTACKS ON

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TPR AND ITS BOARD MEMBERS. ATTACKS INCLUDE ACCUSATIONS

THAT TPR IS EXAGGERATING AND PROMOTING SEPARATION BETWEEN TAIWANESE AND MAINLANDERS AND IS THEREFORE HARMFUL TO THE NATION.

3. A NEW POLITICAL MAGAZINE, CHUNG KUO TAN LUN (THE CHINA TRIBUNE), MADE ITS DEBUT ON DOUBLE TEN (SEE REFTEL). THE BOARD CHAIRMAN OF THIS NEW BI-WEEKLY IS LIEN HO PAO PUBLISHER AND KMT CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER WANG TI-WU (3769/1912/0710), AND ITS PUBLISHER IS LIEN HO PAO CHIEF EDITOR JIMMY YANG (YANG HSUAN-TANG, 2799/6693/1016). IN THE FIRST EDITION PUBLISHER YANG EXPLAINS THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE MAGAZINE IS "TO SERVE THE NATION" BY REFLECTING PUBLIC OPINION, INTRODUCING NEW CONCEPTS, PROVIDING THE PEOPLE WITH KNOWLEDGE, AND PROMOTING NATIONAL UNITY. THE FEATURE ARTICLE OF THIS ISSUE, CHINA AND THE CHINESE TODAY, IS ACTUALLY A COMPOSITE OF TEN SHORTER ARTICLES BY PROFESSORS FROM VARIOUS UNIVERSITIES. ALTHOUGH THE TOPICS COVERED IN THESE AND OTHER ARTICLES COVER A BROAD FIELD (INCLUDING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL QUESTIONS, AND POLITICS), EMPHASIS IS ALMOST SOLELY ON THE UPBEAT, POSITIVE ASPECTS OF LIVING IN TAIWAN. AS A RESULT, THE MAGAZINE -- OR AT LEAST ITS FIRST ISSUE -- FALLS A LITTLE FLAT.

4. THE EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW BOTH TPR AND THE CHINA TRIBUNE; HOWEVER, IF THE OCTBER ISSUES ARE AN INDICATION OF WHAT IS TO FOLLOW, THE PROSPECTS OF EITHER BECOMING A FORUM FOR DISCUSSION OS POLITICALLY SENSITIVE ISSUES ARE SLIM.
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